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STATE FOR ISN/CB, VCI/CCA, L/NPV, IO/MPR,  
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JOINT STAFF FOR DD PMA-A FOR WTC  
COMMERCE FOR BIS (ROBERTS)  
NSC FOR SMITH  
WINPAC FOR WALTER

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [CWC](#)  
SUBJECT: CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (CWC): WRAP UP FOR  
WEEK ENDING MARCH 28, 2008

This is CWC-14-08.

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SUMMARY AND SCENESETTER FOR THE REVIEW CONFERENCE  
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1. (SBU) The last week in March moved from more formal meetings on the Review Conference to less formal but more focused discussions of the Chairman's revised draft text for the report, which was distributed on March 26. The first such informal meeting on March 28 slowly worked through the first twelve paragraphs of the draft, with delegations expressing their views more often on editorial points than major substance. The process of expressing views on specifics, however, will be important to determining just how far apart states' positions are, how strongly some of the more controversial views are held, and how much of the report will be truly contentious.

2. (SBU) The Non-Aligned Movement states led by Cuba have been pushing for this detailed discussion for some time and welcomed its start, although noting how late it began. The Chairman of the working group, Ambassador Lyn Parker (UK), has spent an enormous amount of time revising the draft text and trying to accommodate as many comments as possible (he received over 1,000 on the first draft). The European Union, the Western group (WEOG) and like-minded states are very happy with the text as drafted, but the NAM is insisting that its views be included. The draft report has also subsumed the original plan for a draft political declaration to be discussed well before the conference. The "declaration" (the UK would prefer that it not be deemed "political") is expected to appear for the first time during the week of March 31.

3. (SBU) Despite quite a number of contentious issues in the report (counter-terrorism, destruction, non-proliferation, national implementation, assistance for Articles X and XI, industry inspections, and

others), Del remains optimistic that other delegations -- even Iran -- are working toward a successful conference and that most issues, if not all, can be brought to a successful compromise. More worrisome than sabotage is the question of time. The Working Group will be hard pressed to get through the full text paragraph by paragraph in the one remaining week before the Conference.

¶4. (SBU) The tentative program of work for the Conference (published March 28) devotes three days to the general debate and only begins work -- through the Committee of the Whole -- on Thursday, April 10. Each topic (section of the report) then has one session through Wednesday, April 16, with the final days reserved for subsidiary bodies. We believe that the subsidiary bodies, small drafting/discussion groups, will need to get started early in the Conference and work throughout to reach agreement on the text. The Saudi Ambassador, future Chair of the RevCon, has been assiduously attending the meetings of the working group, and undoubtedly has a firm grasp of the contentious divisions. He will, however, need some strong support from other ambassadors as facilitators during the Conference to make it through the sheer volume of work ahead.

¶5. (U) In addition to the RevCon-related meetings, consultations were held on Article X as well as a local Geneva Group Meeting on March 28.

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WEOG and OEWG  
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¶6. (SBU) The Western European and Others Group (WEOG) met on March 27 just after an EU meeting and before the Open Ended Working Group (OEWG). Reactions to the revised Chairman's composite draft report for the RevCon were generally positive, although all agreed that tactically it would be better not to line up too strongly in favor of the draft. German Ambassador Burkhardt warned that much of the NAM's paper is not in the text and will surface in new proposals. Amb. Javits reminded everyone that the NAM is not an official group and that it should not be given that status in negotiations, which should be by States Parties.

¶7. (SBU) On the Paris seminar hosted by the French government earlier in the week, Amb. Lak of the Netherlands stated that, for him, the workshop pointed to the need for greater education and awareness in the "real world" outside OPCW of the potential for terrorism. He noted that lines of action on terrorism were more for States Parties than for the OPCW. He supported the French recommendations on open source material. The Italian delegate added that the partnership with industry is critical in countering new threats. Amb. Javits spoke of the terrorists' asymmetrical challenge to states and statehood, and the broad capabilities of non-state actors. The French delegate noted that a CD was made of the seminar with copies given to all delegations and available for others who did not attend.

¶8. (U) The OEWG focused once again on procedures. Chairman Parker (UK) presented the revised draft report, with two versions, one highlighting the paragraphs that had substantive revision and the other with clean text. OPCW editors were going through it for standard formatting and grammar, and Amb. Parker welcomed notes of any editorial glitches. He outlined the informal meetings to begin on Friday (March 28), breaking the text into four parts:

-- Paragraphs 1 - 37 to be discussed March 28;

-- Paragraphs 38 - 79 for discussion March 31;  
-- Paragraphs 80 - 105 for discussion April 1;  
-- Paragraphs 106 - 141 for discussion April 2.

The regular OEWG meeting will be on Thursday, April 3, for final operational decisions, with Friday, April 4, open for further discussion as needed. For the four text meetings, informal sessions will start in the morning, with Parker chairing, primarily for questions, clarification and discussion of priorities. The afternoons have been left open for smaller drafting groups as might wish to continue meeting, but Parker asked that the chairmen be identified before the morning meeting disbands and that the chairs report back to the larger group the next day.

¶9. (U) When asked about the political declaration, Parker said a draft will be circulated the week of March 31, and noted -- as in previous meetings -- that he sees this as a short piece targeted to the public. The Iranian delegation spoke (again) in favor of a "solemn declaration" at the beginning of the report, essentially a summary of its contents, with only one document to be produced by the RevCon rather than two. Several delegations, including the U.S., spoke in favor of a simpler document that the general public could understand, rather than a summary of the complex report.

¶10. (U) At the first meeting of the informal OEWG on Friday afternoon, March 28, attendance was nearly as high as for the regular weekly OEWG meetings. After Chairman Parker outlined the changes he had made in the first part of the revised text, describing it at one point as the "Lonely Planet Guide to All the Articles," the group agreed to begin paragraph by paragraph deliberations. The Cuban Ambassador, on behalf of the NAM and China, laid down one final marker that the text should not be distributed to the SPs until the detailed discussions reached agreement, igniting one last rebuttal from the Chair that he is responsible for distributing a draft text to all delegations in advance of the Conference.

¶11. (U) In the three hours of hard slogging discussion that followed, the group only worked through the first sub-section (12 paragraphs). Most of the comments were more editorial than substantive in nature. However, Iran threw out challenges on several problematic issues: stating that the differences in progress in destruction by the various possessor states should be noted in the report; proposing new language on riot control agents and incapacitants; and asserting categorically that there should be no mention in the report of UN Security Council Resolution 1540. Iran's statements elicited strong reaction from a number of delegations, including the U.S. During the protracted debate on which obligations of the Convention were most important, the Russian delegation, largely silent to date in larger OEWG meetings, made several useful interventions, including objecting to adding "fundamental" to the destruction obligation since all obligations in the Convention are fundamental. The Russian delegate, among others, also emphasized that destruction and national implementation are both critical to the Convention.

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ARTICLE X CONSULTATIONS  
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¶12. (U) Informal consultations on Article X were held on Friday, March 28. Facilitator Jitka Brodska announced her intention of relinquishing her role as facilitator at the end of May. She noted that one more round of informal consultations is planned for

mid May on the topic of "readiness to provide assistance" and the Iranian proposals on victims of chemical weapons.

¶13. (U) Technical Secretariat Assistance and Protection Branch (APB) personnel gave a presentation which attempted to both summarize and elaborate on the Director-General's report on the status of implementation of Article X. The German delegate expressed a desire to see a clearer summary and more statistics. As the discussion continued, a running theme became the need for clarification of how APB activities are selected and evaluated. The Italian delegate made a strong call for more information regarding objectives and pointed out the need for evaluation set against targets.

¶14. (U) APB representatives noted that evaluations by participants, National Authorities, and the TS take place after projects are completed. They stated that considerable effort is made to ensure that appropriate personnel attend training and that "train the trainer" courses were the ideal. The APB representative noted that demand for training and assistance is greater than what budget constraints allow the TS to supply. He noted a need for greater voluntary contributions which currently cover approximately 35 per cent of expenses, the rest coming from the regular budget.

¶15. (U) Delrep repeated our concern regarding obligatory Article X Paragraph 4 reporting that has declined since last year. The APB representative acknowledged that there may have been State Parties that participated in an APB program that had not submitted a report, despite every effort to encourage them to do so.

¶16. (U) APB's plan of activities for 2008 was not discussed as a separate agenda item. The facilitator closed the meeting by noting that this item had been covered in discussions of the DG's report. In general terms, there was an agreement to focus on a further definition of goals and a better evaluation of activities. APB pointed out that a volunteer is still needed for a Joint Exercise (similar to the one held in Ukraine in 2005) possibly to be held in 2009. The preference would be to hold the exercise in some other geographical area in order to work in different climatic conditions.

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GENEVA GROUP  
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¶17. (U) On March 21, Angela Peart (Canada) and Mike Byers (Australia) co-chaired a meeting of the Geneva Group to discuss a draft report on the OPCW (emailed to ISN/CB and IO/MPR). There was general agreement on the report, with the UK, Germany, and Japan providing minor additions. Peart promised to circulate the final report after forwarding it to Geneva; the report is expected to be addressed at a pre-Expert Level Meeting, scheduled to take place in Geneva on April 3.

¶18. (U) Delrep highlighted U.S. concern that the OPCW does not tap into its Working Capital Fund despite cash-flow problems, due in large part to late receipt of assessed contributions. Other reps agreed to engage the TS, specifically the DG, on the issue. Byers noted that he will be stepping down as co-chair and asked for interested replacements to contact Peart.

¶19. (U) Javits sends.

Gallagher